

Subsidy on postal services in rural areas

4166. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for lower targeted pace of expansion of Postal network especially in rural areas;

(b) the details of physical targets set for and achievement made for the expansion of postal network in rural areas during the last three years, till date, year-wise;

(c) whether subsidy on postal services is provided particularly in rural areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Postal services of daily delivery and collection of mails have been provided to all the rural areas throughout the length and breadth of the country. In addition sale of stamps and stationery is also done through the delivery agents when they go out for deliveries in those areas where there is no post office. Our network coverage, the number of post offices we have and average area and population a post office serves in India fair well when compared to the postal networks of most of the countries including the developed ones. In addition, we have evolved a new planned scheme i.e. Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Yojana which seeks to make use of the third tier of administration for expansion of postal network in the rural areas. Our network and our spread of services across the rural areas are thus satisfactory. The post offices are opened in rural areas on norm based

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RAJYA SABHA

justification subject to availability of resources. Break up of targets for opening of Post Offices and achievements made during the last three years is given below:—

Year	Target		Achievement	
	Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs)	Departmental Sub Post Offices (DSOs)	Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs)	Departmental Sub Post Offices (DSOs)
1997-98	500	50	402	52
1998-99	598	50	598	50
1999-2000	500	50	360*	47*

*As on 28.3.2001

(c) and (d) The three norms on which a proposal for opening of post office is examined relate to distance, population and income. Extra Departmental Branch Post Office is opened, if income of the proposed post office meets 33.3% of its cost for normal rural areas and 15% in hilly, tribal, desert and inaccessible areas.

Installation of public telephones in Assam

4167. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications lying pending for installation of public telephone booths in Assam till date togetherwith the details thereof; and

(b) by when these applications are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, 698 applications are pending for allotment of public telephones booths in